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Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 EB-11 FSI-01 PM-07 INR-10 IO-15

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 DRC-01 DPW-01 PRS-01

OMB-01 SS-15 /115 W
---------- 012183
P R 041025Z OCT 73
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7760
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USDEL JEC PARIS
CIA
DIA
JCS
JUSMAAG
WHITE HOUSE
USAJFKCMA
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
USDAO SAIGON
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CINCUSARPAC
DEPCHIEF JUSMAAG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 17446

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, ECON, VS
SUBJECT: EMBASSY SAIGON'S MISSION WEEKLY, SEPTEMBER 28 - OCTOBER 4, 1973

BANGKOK ALSO PASS OSA; DEPT ALSO FOR AID/W; CINCPAC FOR POLAD;
DOD PRO USAJFKCAM ATTN: ATCS-WL-DSA

THE WEEK IN BRIEF

--BIGGEST BATTLE IN MR-3 SINCE JANUARY; ASSASSINATIONS FESTURED IN MR'S 3 AND 4

--A WORD FROM THIEU IN PLEIKU
--NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OPENS FALL SESSION
--A NOTE OF PROTEST ON LE MINH ATTACK
--BILATERALS: AND THE TALK GOES ON
--TO APU FROM THIEU
--JAPANESE PARLIAMENTARIANS RECEIVED AT THE PALACE
--ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER DUC'S ACTIVITIES AT UNGA
--FINMIN NGOC GOES TO SEOUL
--DRV PROTESTS U.S. NAVY PRESENCE
--DRV AND PRG PROTEST NIBBLING OPERATIONS
--VIET CONG LEADERS PRESS ON
--DRV AND PRG MARK 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF PRC
--WEST GERMAN PRO-VC ORGANIZATION VISITS HANOI
--PRG DELEGATION DEPARTS FOR HELSINKI MEETING ON CHILE
--PRG RECOGNIZES REPUBLIC OF GUINEA (BISSAU)
--DRV-ROMANIA MEDICAL PACT SIGNED
--RUMORS OF HARSHER ECONOMIC MEASURES YET TO COME
--RETAIL PRICE INDEX STILL ON THE RISE; 0.9 PERCENT LAST WEEK
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--GOLD STILL MORE VALUABLE
--OIL COMPANY PAYMENTS MADE LAST WEEK, NOT SEPTEMBER 18

I. INTERNAL

A. THE CEASEFIRE

IN MR-1, MILITARY ACTIVITY REMAINED AT A LOW LEVEL NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS, BUT THERE WAS AN INCREASE IN ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS IN ALL THREE PROVINCES TO THE SOUTH; NOTABLY AGAINST LOC'S, INCLUDING ROUTE 1. IN MR-2, THERE WERE NO NEW ENEMY INITIATIVES IN THE PLEIKU-KONTUM AREA, BUT THERE HAS BEEN SOME INCREASE IN HARASSMENT IN THE NORMALLY TRANQUIL SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS.

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ALONG THE COAST, REPORTED ACTIVITY WAS GENERALLY THE RESULT OF GVN OPERATIONS TO SECURE AREAS OF BINH DINH AND TO DENY RICE TO THE ENEMY THROUGHOUT THE LOWLANDS. IN MR-3, THE STEADY DECLINE IN MILITARY ACTIVITY REACHED THE LOWEST LEVEL SINCE EARLY JULY -- UNTIL THE QUIET WAS SHATTERED SEPTEMBER 29 BY THE BIGGEST BATTLE SINCE JANUARY. IN THIS ACTION IN SOUTHERN TAY NINH, A BATTALION OF THE 25TH DIVISION WAS DESTROYED IN AN AMBUSH. IN THE DELTA, ARVN RANGERS ARE DISENGAGING SHORT OF THEIR OBJECTIVE OF DRIVING THE NVA FROM GIAI MOUNTAIN IN CHAU DOC, PREPARATORY TO DEPARTING MR-4 AS PART OF THE RANGER FORCE REORGANIZATION. ASSASSINATIONS HAVE BEEN A FEATURE OF RECENT ENEMY ACTIVITY IN BOTH MR-3 AND MR-4. WITH TNE NEW POLISH AND IRANIAN AMBASSADORS ON BOARD AND THE FIRST CONTINGENT OF THE LATTER'S TEAM DUE TO ARRIVE WITHIN THE WEEK, THE ICCS SHOWS SIGNS OF A DESIRE TO RESUME FULL OPERATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE TPJMC FELL VICTIM TO THE FALLOUT FROM PLEI DJERENG, (LE MINH) AS THE TWO-PARTIES TOOK TURNS IN LEVELING CHARGES, DEMANDING INVESTIGATIONS, AND STAGING WALKOUTS. THE USUAL WRANGLING IN THE FPJMT WAS ALSO CUT SHORT ON OCTOBER 2 BY A PRG WALKOUT.

B. PRESIDENT THIEU SPEAKS IN PLEIKU

ON OCTOBER 1, PRESIDENT THIEU, PARTICIPATING IN A MILITARY CEREMONY IN PLEIKU, STRONGLY CONDEMNED THE COMMUNISTS FOR ATTACKING AND OVERRUNNING THE GVN RANGER CAMP AT LE MINH. PRESIDENT THIEU WARNED THAT THE ENEMY IS SEEKING TO PREPARE FOR A NEW GENERAL OFFENSIVE IN "TWO OR THREE MONTHS" AND ORDERED RVNAF FORCES TO BE VIGILANT AND TO RETALIATE TO "ACTS OF WAR" WITH "ACTS OF WAR."
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C. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OPENS FALL SESSION

THE TWO HOUSES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MET SEPARATELY OCTOBER 1 TO OPEN THE FIRST THREE-MONTH SESSION OF THE 1973-74 LEGISLATIVE TERM. A ROUTINE MESSAGE OF GREETING FROM PRESIDENT THIEU WAS READ AT EACH MEETING. LOWER HOUSE CHAIRMAN NGUYEN BA CAN AND UPPER HOUSE CHAIRMAN NGUYEN VAN HUYEN DELIVERED BRIEF SPEECHES. BOTH OF THE THREE NEWLY-ELECTED SENATORS AND THE SENATORS WHOSE TERMS ARE EXPIRING ATTENDED THE UPPER HOUSE SESSION, WHICH WAS THE LAST PLENARY MEETING FOR THE OUTGOING GROUP.

THE UPPER HOUSE IS NOW STUDYING THE CREDENTIALS OF THE NEWCOMERS AND IS EXPECTED TO VALIDATE ALL OF THEM WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE. BOTH HOUSES PLAN TO ELECT OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN NEXT WEEK.

PART II. EXTERNAL

A. GVN SENDS PROTEST ON LE MINH ATTACK TO PARIS PARTIES

ON OCTOBER 1 THE GVN RELEASED THE TEXT OF A 27 SEPTEMBER NOTE SENT TO THE PARTIES TO THE ACT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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ON VIET-NAM DENOUNCING THE COMMUNIST ATTACK ON LE MINH,
ASKING THE ADDRESSEES TO PERSUADE THE DRV AND "PRG" TO
CEASE SUCH ACTIONS, EXPRESSING THE WISH THAT THE ADDRESSEES
SHOULD CONSULT AMONG THEMSELVES TO PREVENT FURTHER
DETERIORATION OF THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIET-NAM, AND
RESERVING THE GVN'S RIGHT TO TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO DEFEND
ITSELF.

B. GVN/PRG BILATERALS

THE GVN/PRG BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS TAKING
PLACE IN FRANCE TO SEEK A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH
VIET-NAM CONTINUED TO MARK TIME. AT TWENTY SEVENTH
PLENARY SESSION ON SEPTEMBER 27 THE PRG CONDEMNED GVN MILITARY
OPERATIONS AND DETENTION POLICY, SPEFICYING SEVERAL
EXAMPLES OF FORMER, AND THE GVN PROTESTED THE COMMUNIST
ATTACK ON LE MINH (SEE ABOVE). THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF
POLITICAL SUBJECTS. NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 4.
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C. PRESIDENT THIEU SENDS MESSAGE TO APU

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT THIEU WAS READ ON OCTOBER 2
TO THE ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION WHICH IS MEETING
IN SEOUL AND TO WHICH GVN HAS SENT A DELEGATION. PRESIDENTIAL
MESSAGE COMPLAINED OF COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF PAGAS AGREEMENT
BUT, AS HAS BEEN THE CASE IN SEVERAL RECENT GVN
STATEMENTS MADE FOR FOREIGN AUDIENCES, STRESSED THE
GVN'S INTEREST IN WORLD-WIDE DETENTE AND ONCE AGAIN EXPRESSED
ITS WILLINGNESS TO HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WILL ALL
NATIONS, REGARDLESS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SYSTEM.

D. JAPANESE PARLIAMENTARIANS VISIT SAIGON

A DELEGATION OF JAPANESE LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY
PARLIAMENTARIANS HAS BEEN VISITING SAIGON, WAS RECEIVED
BY PRESIDENT THIEU ON OCTOBER 2, AND CALLED AT THE
DEMOCRACY (DAN CHU) PARTY HEADQUARTERS. IT IS ACCOMPANIED
BY THE JAPANESE VICE FOREIGN MINISTER IN CHARGE OF LIAISON
WITH THE DIET, KIYOSHI MIZUNE.

E. GVN ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER'S ACTIVITIES IN NEW YORK

OFFICIAL GVN MEDIA HAVE BEEN GIVING FULL PUBLICITY
TO ACTIVITIES OF ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN PHU DUC
WHO HAS BEEN IN NEW YORK FOR UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY. IT HAS
BEEN REPORTED THAT HE WAS TO MEET WITH ABOUT TWENTY-FIVE
FOREIGN MINISTERS, AMONG WHOM WERE SECRETARY OF STATE
KISSINGER AND THE MINISTERS OF INDIA, INDONESIA AND AUSTRALIA.
EXCERPTS FROM HIS TALKS AND INTERVIEWS WITH PRESS HAVE BEEN
DISTRIBUTED TO FOREIGN PRESS REPRESENTATIVES IN SAIGON.

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F. FIFTH CONFERENCE ON GVN-ROK ECONOMIC COOPERATION

MINISTER OF FINANCE PHAM KIM GOC WILL HEAD THE GVN
DELEGATION TO FIFTH CONFERENCE ON GVN-ROK ECONOMIC COOPERATION,
TO BE HELD IN SEOUL STARTING OCTOBER 8.

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ACTION EA-14

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 DRC-01 DPW-01 PRS-01

OMB-01 SS-15 /115 W
---------- 012300
P R 041025Z OCT 73
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7761
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USDEL JEC PARIS
CIA
DIA
JCS
JUSMAAG
WHITE HOUSE
USAJFKCMA
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMCONSUL DANANG
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 17446

G. DRV SPOKESMAN PROTESTS US NAVAL ACTIVITY

ON OCT 2 THE SPOKESMAN OF THE DRV FOREIGN MINISTRY PROTESTED THE PRESENCE, 120 MILES OFF THE DRV COAST, OF THE US NAVY AIRCRAFT CARRIER HANCOCK, THE APPROACH OF SIX US DESTROYERS TO 60-80 MILES OFFSHORE, AND THE OVERFLIGHT BY US JET FIGHTERS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE FISHING BOATS. THE SPOKESMAN CALLED THESE ACTS PROVOCATIONS AND VIOLATIONS OF THE SPIRIT AND LETTER OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT, "PAVING THE WAY FOR FRESH MILITARY ADVENTURES", AND DEMANDED THAT THEY BE STOPPED.

H. DRV AND PRG PROTEST GVN NIBBLING OPERATIONS

ON SEPT 26 THE DRV AND PRG FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN DENOUNCED GVN MILITARY OPERATIONS AND ASSERTED THAT GVN PROTESTS TO THE ICCS AND THE TWO PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION (TPJMC) ABOUT THE LE MINH ATTACK (SEE ABOVE) WERE ATTEMPTS TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM GVN AND US VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE. EXTENSIVE COMMENTARY HAS SINCE CONTINUED ALONG THE SAME LINE. ON OCT 4 THE PRG FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN CONDEMNED GVN ATTACKS IN TAY NINH PROVINCE.

I. VIET CONG LEADERS' TRIP GOES ON

NLF CHIEFTAIN NGUYEN HUU THO AND MRS NGUYEN THI BINH, FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE PRG, CONTINUED THEIR TRAVELS IN AFRICA, VISITING TANZANIA FROM SEPT 25 TO 29, AND UGANDA STARTING SEPT 29. THO WAS GIVEN CHIEF OF STATE TREATMENT AND SPEECHES BY HOSTS AND GUESTS WERE STRIDENTLY ANTI-US. NO INDICATION YET OF NEXT STOP.
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J. DRV AND PRG MARK 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF PRC

TWENTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF PRC ON OCTOBER 1 WAS OCCASION FOR STATE MESSAGES OF CONGRATULATIONS FROM DRV AND PRG, PRC RECEPTION IN HANOI, AND MUCH DRV MEDIA ATTENTION.SPEECH IN HANOI BY PRC AMBASSADOR STATED INTER ALIA THAT TAIWAN WOULD CERTAINLY BE LIBERATED, THAT

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THE THIRD WORLD MUST CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM, COLONIALISM, AND HEGEMONISN, AND REFERRED TO THE VIETNAM WAR AS BEING OVER. GOVERNMENTAL DRV AND PRG MESSAGES WERE FULSOME IN PRAISE OF PRC ASSISTANCE TO STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION OF VIETNAM AND OFFICIAL DRV PARTY NEWSPAPER NHAN DAN EXPRESSED TOTAL BACKING FOR RECOVERY OF TAIWAN.

K. WEST GERMAN PRO-VC ORGANIZATION VISITS HANOI

A DELEGATION FROM THE WEST GERMAN "INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVE IN SOLIDARITY WITH VIETNAM" VISITED HANOI FROM SEPT 22-29, CALLED ON PRG REPRESENTATIVE, AND MADE EXPECTED ANTI-US AND PRO-VC STATEMENTS.

L. PRG DELEGATION DEPARTS FOR HELSINKI MEETING ON CHILE

A PRG DELEGATION LED BY NLF CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER NGUYEN VAN THAN HAS LEFT FOR "INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR SOLIDARITY WITH CHILE" BEING HELD IN HELSINKI.

M. PRG RECOGNIZES REPUBLIC OF GUINEA (BISSAU)

ON SEPT 28, 1973, "PRG" SENT MESSAGE TO "REPUBLIC OF GUINEA (BISSAU)" RECOGNIZING THE NEWLY-FOUNDED INSURGENT GOVERNMENT.

N. DRV-ROMANIA MEDICAL PACT SIGNED

THE VIETNAM NEWS AGENCY (HANOI) ANNOUNCED ON OCTOBER 2 THAT DRV AND ROMANIAN VICE MINISTERS OF PUBLIC HEALTH RECENTLY SIGNED A MEDICAL COOPERATION PLAN IN HANOI COVERING THE PERIOD AUGUST 1 TO DEC 31, 1973.
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BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

III. ECONOMIC

A. GENERAL

SPECULATIVE TENDENCIES AND RUMORS OF NEW, HARSHER ECONOMIC MEASURES YET TO COME WERE ON THE UPSWING AGAIN IN THE PAST WEEK.THE SHARPEST SIGNALS WERE REGISTERED IN THE BRISK ADVANCE OF GOLD AND BLACK MARKET CURRENCY PRICES AND REPORTS FROM BANKING SOURCES THAT BANKS HAVE BEEN LOSING SAVINGS DEPOSITS IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS (CONFIRMING DATA FROM THE NATIONAL BANK ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE). A NUMBER OF FACTORS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS MOOD, CONCERN OVER THE RICE SITUATION, AN UPSURGE IN HOSTILITIES IN TAY NINH AND PLEIKU PROVINCES, AND INTENSIFIED SPECULATION ABOUT

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AN IMMINENT CABINET RESHUFFLE. RUMORS CIRCULATING THIS PAST WEEK PREDICTED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, FURTHER DRASTIC INCREASES IN POL AND SUGAR PRICES AND AN IMPENDING MAJOR DEPRECIATION OF THE PIASTER. OFFICIAL DENIALS THAT NEW PRICE INCREASES ARE IN THE OFFING AND THE ANNOUNCEMENT ON OCTOBER 2 OF ANOTHER TEN PIASTER DEPRECIATION OF THE PIASTER SERVED TO DISSIPATE THESE RUMORS.

IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS, A LOAN FROMA FRENCH BANKING CONSORTIUM FOR EXPANSION OF THE HA TIEN CEMENT WORKS WAS OFFICIALLY SIGNED ON SEPT 27. THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING WITHDREW APPROVAL FOR THE HOTEL PROJECT SUBMITED BY NISSHO-IWAI ON THE GROUNDS THEY WERE NOT TAKING SUFFICIENT ACTION AND INVITED THE HYATT HOTEL GROUP TO RESUBMIT ITS PROPOSAL. THE TWO OTHER MAJOR HOTEL PROJECTS ARE BOTH ADVANCING. MITSUBISHI-DENIS FRERES IS NOW HOPING TO BEGIN CONSTRUCTION IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1974 AND NEGOTIATIONS FOR LEASE OF A GOVERNMENT-OWNED SITE FOR THE HILTON HOTEL PROJECT ARE REPORTED NEAR COMPLETION.

B. PRICES

THE USAID SAIGON RETAIL PRICE INDEX INCREASED 0.9 PERCENT FOR THE WEEK ENDING OCT 1 WITH A FURTHER 2 PERCENT RISE
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IN FREE MARKET RICE PRICES (19 PERCENT FROM A MONTH AGO) AND AN 8 PERCENT INCREASE IN SUGAR PRICES.

C. BLACK MARKET CURRENCY AND GOLD

THE BLACK MARKET QUOTE FOR US$ 100 GREEN ROSE FROM 523 TO 540 BETWEEN SEPT 24 AND OCT 1; AS OF MID-WEEK IT HAD STABILIZED AT THAT LEVEL DESPITE DEPRECIATION OF THE OFFICIAL RATE FROM 510:1 TO 520:1 ON OCT 2. THE PRICE OF GOLD LEAF, MEANWHILE, CLIMBED EVEN MORE SWIFTLY, RISING VN$ 8,500 TO VN$ 73,500 PER TAEL ON OCTOBER 1.

D. FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES

WE HAVE LEARNED THAT THE US$ 17 MILLION IN OIL COMPANY PAYMENTS WAS NOT MADE AT THE TIME OF OFFICIAL CEREMONY ON SEPT 18 AS REPORTED LAST WEEK. THE PAYMENTS WERE MADE INSTEAD THIS PAST WEEK AND SHOULD APPEAR IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE STATISTICS FOR THE WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 5.
APPLING

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, ECON, VS, US, KS, VN, APU, (THIEU)
To: STATE INFO BANGKOK
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DIA
JCS
JUSMAAG
WHITE HOUSE
USAJFKCMA
BIEN HOA
CAN THO
TEHRAN
DANANG
NHA TRANG
USDAO SAIGON
CINCPAC
CINCPACAF
CO PSYOPS GP
CINCPACFLT
CINCUSARPAC
DEPCHIEF JUSMAAG
Type: TE
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